

Education Policy

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Minor changes made after authorization date	28-9-2016: Dr. Prisca Zwanniken is appointed as chair of the complaint board for DATOS courses. This was indicated as such in this document in chapter 7.

Aim of the document

The DATOS education policy aims to transparently describe the way in which DATOS manages, organizes, support and treats its courses, trainers and trainees. The structure of the document follows the structure of the CRKBO (Central Register for Short Vocational Training) audit checklist, as this will ensure that all elements that are important to develop, execute and facilitate high quality courses are in place. Where possible this document refers to locations where information and materials can be found, such as the website or the file or folder in the DATOS documentation system.

1. Organisation of courses

DATOS realizes that for many of the participants it is a big commitment to follow an international course, both in terms of time and in terms of finances. As funding opportunities for international training are scarce in most organizations, it is of paramount importance to choose the course that best suits the participant's needs to improve his or her practical skills and/or theoretical knowledge.

DATOS takes utmost care to provide true, complete and accurate information on all of its courses, both in course promotion campaigns and in the information provided to individuals. All information for each course is provided on our website (see chapter 3)

DATOS has assigned one of its CEOs, Tjeerd Datema, MSc, as Head of Training. Mr. Datema serves as overall training program coordinator and knows every course both from a content perspective and from a contractual perspective. He is the first contact person. In case of his absence, Dr. Linda Oskam, PhD serves as his replacement. When absent, the out of office mailing is on so that people seeking contact will know who to turn to for answers to their questions.

DATOS can be reached through email, Skype and telephone and aims to answer all administrative and technical (content) questions within 10 working days. We encourage prospects to ask for more detailed information to ensure that they attend a course that suits their needs.

DATOS organizes courses in two different ways:

- Abroad, based on client requests
- In the Netherlands, in collaboration with KIT

DATOS also plans to organize courses in the Netherlands autonomously. These courses are currently under development.

Organization of courses abroad

DATOS regularly receives requests for organization of (tailor-made) courses to be provided at a location abroad (such as a hotel, a laboratory, etc.). Clients can include single laboratories, Ministries of Health, public health agencies such as the World Health organization, projects and other organizations. In close communication with the client the terms of reference are formulated and DATOS sends an offer to the client. Upon acceptance of the offer a contract is developed between the client and DATOS. Upon signing the contract DATOS will start preparing the course materials and communicates often with the client about practical arrangements such as course location, printing of materials, arrangement of tickets and visa, etc. After provision of the course DATOS drafts a report that will be send to the client, together with the invoice.

Organization of training in the Netherlands in collaboration with KIT

DATOS currently provides one course on regular basis in collaboration with the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT): *Training in Laboratory Quality Management and the WHO LQSI Tool*. The registration process for this course goes through KIT: participants can request an application form by completing an online request form on the KIT website. Upon receiving this request DATOS sends the application form in PDF format to the interested person by email. Upon reception of the completed form the person's skills and background is screened and when these meet the admission criteria, the person receives a pro-forma invoice from KIT. Upon reception of payment by KIT the person is accepted to the course and registration is confirmed to the participant. The participant will subsequently be supported by DATOS in arranging practical issues such as hotel accommodation and visa requests. The details and registration status of each interested person is registered in a database kept in Excel. This database also includes a communication logbook which serves to coordinate regular follow-up with each interested person.

Organization of training in the Netherlands by DATOS autonomously

DATOS plans to provide multiple short-courses in the near future autonomously. Persons can apply to participate in a specific course by completing an online form on the website of DATOS. Upon reception of the form the person's skills and background will be screened and when these meet the admission criteria for the specific course, DATOS will send the person a pro-forma invoice. Upon reception of the payment the person is accepted to the course and registration is confirmed to the participant. The participant will subsequently be supported by DATOS in arranging practical issues such as hotel accommodation and visa requests. The details and registration status of each interested person is registered in a database kept in Excel. This database also includes a communication logbook which serves to coordinate regular follow-up with each interested person.

Two weeks preceding the start of the course the participants receive a practical information booklet by email. This booklet contains all the information needed to get around in The Netherlands, such as information about taxi's, public transport, money, food, drinking water, emergency numbers, and how to reach the course location. This book also contains a telephone number that participants can use to call one of the trainers in case of emergency.

Course evaluation

Course evaluation schemes depend on the requirements of the donor but include at least an extensive evaluation at the end of each course. When organized by DATOS, short course and teacher evaluation forms are handed out twice per day.

At the end of each course extensive evaluation forms are handed out and participants are actively encouraged to not only provide praise (which is often a cultural practice), but also indicate points for improvement. Depending on the course, these evaluation forms will contain questions on content, organization and teachers and if applicable location, meals and social program. These evaluations are anonymous and are analyzed in detail during and after the course to ensure ad hoc or structural improvements as required.

Each course leads to a course report with action points based on the observations by the participants as well as by the trainers.

DATOS treats all information from its clients as confidential. Information will only be shared with other parties when the client agrees to this. This information sharing will mostly be in the form of bringing two external parties in contact with each other if DATOS thinks that this can be mutually beneficial. Detailed information can then be exchanged by the parties if they both feel that this is opportune.

During courses, especially when participants share concerns, challenges or other confidential information with each other, DATOS trainers always stress that anything that is said remains within the group and should be treated as confidential.

2. Trainers

DATOS currently has 2 trainers:

- Tjeerd Datema, MSc
- Linda Oskam, PhD

Both trainers are also the founders and owners of DATOS and as such have designed the management and administrative structure and procedures of DATOS and thus know this by heart.

There are 2 scenarios for additional trainers:

- An additional trainer will be hired on a short term contract.
- An additional trainer will be an employee of DATOS.

In both cases, the suitability of the trainer will be assessed from both the technical (expertise) and the educational (training skills) perspective by the current trainers through CVs, interviews and/or observation of training sessions.

When a trainer is new to the course, a process of observation of the course by the new trainer followed by giving training under guidance of an experienced trainer will be followed.

For DATOS employees, continuous education to stay up to date with new developments (both technical and educational) will be regularly assessed and provided as required.

CVs of all trainers, that are updated at least quarterly, are available in the CV database of DATOS (folder D16-03 acquisitie > CVs).

3. Promotion

As indicated in chapter 1, DATOS considers providing accurate and complete information on courses of prime importance. The complete course catalogue can be found on the website: <http://datos-advice.nl/what-2/laboratory%20training-2.html>

The course catalogue contains direct links to detailed course information. The information is provided according to a set structure:

1. Title of the course
2. Date and location
3. Introduction
4. Programme
5. Learning objectives
6. Who should participate?
7. Length of the course
8. Course fee
9. Accommodation (optional)

When interested, persons can request more information, or a quote, by completing a contact form on the website.

As indicated in chapter 1: DATOS is planning to organize multiple short courses autonomously in the Netherlands. These courses will be announced in mass mailings that will be sent to DATOS' contacts. These mailing will contain a link to the course catalogue on the website of DATOS and an email address that can be used to request more information.

DATOS currently provides one course on regular basis in collaboration with the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT): *Training in Laboratory Quality Management and the WHO LQSI Tool*. Information about this course is published both on the website of KIT and DATOS. KIT regularly sends mass-mailings to its contacts with information about this course. These emails contain links to the course information page on the website of KIT, and also includes a link to the website of DATOS, which also contains information about this course. The emails contain an email address that can be used to request more information about a specific course.

4. Contracts and general conditions

All contracts are based on the DATOS general conditions, which can be found on the website (http://datos-advice.nl/onewebmedia/General%20Conditions%20DATOS_v160606.pdf).

Courses organized for individual participants in the Netherlands

Because all courses organized by DATOS in the Netherlands are short-courses with a maximum duration of one week, DATOS deems it unnecessary to make separate contracts with each participant. Instead, the pro-forma invoice contains terms for payment and reimbursement, including time frames for reimbursement. Upon payment, the participant accepts these terms.

Courses organized abroad

Upon acceptance of an offer by a client, a contract is developed in collaboration with the client. These contracts are usually developed by the client and amended by DATOS. The contracts always include terms for payment and reimbursement, including time frames for reimbursement. Countersigned copies are kept in the DATOS folder with the relevant project number. The client receives a digital and/or hard copy of the contract.

5. Execution

All DATOS' courses are based on adult learning principles and include a variety of teaching methodologies such as lectures, group work, role playing, debate, individual assignments and assessments as appropriate. If a course is given as a training of trainers (ToT), specific attention will be paid to adult learning principles and microteaching sessions may be part of the course.

Course materials are made available to each participant in PDF format and/or as hard copy. Materials remain property of DATOS, unless this is otherwise arranged contractually with the client. This prevents the use of the slides with the DATOS logo directly by people who have not been approved by DATOS as trainers, which would compromise quality assurance. Templates and other documents, when applicable, are handed out as Word or Excel file for direct use by the participants in their own work.

At the moment DATOS is not planning to develop e-learning or blended learning modules solely under its own name. If and when this is required, DATOS will seek collaboration with an experienced and reputable party that will be able to offer all the technical and e-learning requirements for these courses and will concentrate on the content of the module.

6. Examinations

DATOS' courses may involve assignments, even final assignments, but do not involve examinations. Each participant will receive a certificate of attendance. To determine whether participants have gained knowledge from the course, pre- and post-tests are administered for each course.

7. Complaint procedures

It is of utmost importance that participants make the most of the course they attend. They are therefore encouraged to discuss any criticism they have on any aspect of the (quality of the) course during the duration of the course with the lead trainer. The trainer and the participant can then together try to find a solution for the problem.

Our experience so far is that sometimes participants feel that more explanation is needed to make a session content directly applicable to their specific laboratory or situation. In this case the trainers sit with the participant after sessions to further discuss the specifics of that particular information.

Handling of complaints

DATOS has a standardized complaint form that can be used to lodge complaints, report non-conformities or make suggestions for improvement. This form can be found on 'DATOS gedeelde map/D16-02 Management/Onderwijs' and a digital form is available on our website: <http://datos-advice.nl/suggestions%20for%20improvement.html>. At the top, it provides clear instructions for the client on how to submit the information. The first part asks the client to give a detailed description of the complaint, non-conformity or suggestion for improvement. The second part registers the activity that DATOS has undertaken to handle the issue and the date and content of the feedback provided to the client. When DATOS receives a complaint DATOS will confirm reception to the client within ten working days. Each issue will be handled confidentially and the period for handling is four weeks. The client will be informed within three weeks if a longer period is required.

For courses organized in collaboration with KIT (CRKBO registered), it was agreed with the Head of KIT Health Education, Dr. Prisca Zwanniken, to use the KIT complaint procedure, which uses the Free University complaint board.

For other courses DATOS has appointed a complaint board which will provide a binding advice, chaired by the Head of KIT Health, Dr. Prisca Zwanniken, as the education specialist and a topic specialist (to be identified as appropriate by Dr. Zwanniken). Complaint board members will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. The decision of the independent complaint board will be binding for DATOS.

Complaints forms, including the information on which the reported issue was handled will be kept for a period of five years in the complaint register (DATOS gedeelde map/D16-02 Management/Klachten).